

Message Text

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DEPARTMENT FOR CU

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SUBJECT: BICENTENNIAL CONCERTS IN HELSINKI

AS THE FIRST EVENTS OF THE U.S. BICENTENNIAL YEAR, THE HELSINKI CITY ORCHESTRA OPENED ITS 1976 SEASON ON JANUARY 15TH WITH AN ALL-AMERICAN PROGRAM CONDUCTED BY PAUL FREEMAN OF THE DETROIT SYMPHONY WITH DETROIT'S STAR CELLIST, ITALO BABINI, AS SOLOIST.

USIS CAPITALIZED ON THIS MUSICAL OPPORTUNITY BY ARRANGING PRIOR TO THE CONCERT A SPECIAL CELLO RECITAL-RECEPTION AT THE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE IN HONOR OF FREEMAN AND BABINI. THIRTY-FIVE FINNISH LEADERS FROM GOVERNMENT, POLITICS, AND THE MEDIA, ATTENDED THIS HOUSE CONCERT WHICH INCLUDED THE WORLD PREMIERE OF "THEMES AND VARIATIONS," BY COMPOSER JULIUS CHAJES WHO WROTE THIS COMPOSITION FOR TWO CELLI ESPECIALLY FOR THE OCCASION. AMONG THE GUESTS WERE: THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARLIAMENTARY GROUP, THE CHIEF OF TELEVISION'S FIRST CHANNEL, THE CHIEF EDITOR OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL ORGAN, "DEMARI," THE CHIEF EDITOR OF THE BIG SWEDISH LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER, "HUVUDSTADSBLADET," THE CHIEF EDITOR OF THE FINNISH NEWS AGENCY, THE PRESIDENT'S ADVISOR ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, THE CHIEF OF FINLAND'S LARGEST CONCERT AGENCY, THE MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE HELSINKI SYMPHONY, THE DIRECTOR OF THE SIBELIUS ACADEMY, THE BRITISH, FRENCH, JAPANESE, AND BRAZILIAN

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AMBASSADORS, ETC.

FOUR NEWLY APPOINTED MINISTERS COULD NOT ATTEND THE RECITAL BECAUSE OF A LAST MINUTE EVENING CABINET MEETING.

IN ADDITION TO STIMULATING AN EXCELLENT TWO PHOTO ARTICLE IN HELSINGIN SANOMAT WHICH PRAISED THE AMBASSADOR FOR BOTH THE QUALITY OF THE MUSIC AND THE ACOUSTICS AT THE RESIDENCE, THE RECITAL PROVIDED THE EMBASSY WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO INTRODUCE AND EMPHASIZE THE AMERICAN BICENTENNIAL AND TO STRENGTHEN CONTACTS WITH POLITICAL, MEDIA, AND CULTURAL LEADERS IN HELSINKI.

APPROXIMATELY 1000 PEOPLE ATTENDED THE USA BICENTENNIAL CONCERT BY HELSINKI CITY ORCHESTRA EVENING OF JANUARY 15TH. PAUL FREEMAN CONDUCTED PROGRAM COMPOSED OF IVES - "THREE PLACES IN NEW ENGLAND," BLOCH - "SCHELOMO," ERB - "SYMPHONY OF OVERTURES," BARBER - "MEDIA'S MEDITATION AND DANCE OF VENGEANCE." LATTER TWO WERE FIRST PERFORMANCES IN FINLAND, FINLAND'S FOREMOST MUSIC CRITIC, TAWASTJERNA, COMMENTED IN HELSINGIN SANOMAT (CIRCL 316,000) "ITALO BABINI INTERPRETED SCHELOMO PASSIONATELY AND EXPRESSIVELY WITHOUT REVERTING TO EXCESSIVE PATHOS. THE SOLOISTS SENSED INNERMOST ESSENCE OF THE TONE LANGUAGE OF BLOCH. HE MASTERS HIS TECHNIQUES PERFECTLY AND FROM HIS GUARNERI INSTRUMENT EMANATES A VELVETLY SOFT, REFINED TONE. ...THIS FINE AND THOROUGHLY INTERESTING CONCERT BECAME A VICTORY ALSO FOR PAUL FREEMAN." HELSINKI'S OTHER DAILIES UUSI SUOMI, KANSAN UUTISET, AND HUFVUDSTADSBLADET ALSO PRINTED REVIEWS OF BICENTENNIAL CONCERT, GENERALLY MOST FAVORABLE.
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